

June 2nd. The progress of our ferry-boat was a good deal hampered by a stiff gale blowing from N. 60° E., the river happening to run precisely in that direction. The tract immediately below our camp was called Tinatschini-kötörmesu; it possessed an old arik. From the right proceeded a large canal, as usual dry, leading to the similarly dry lake of Ettek-köl; this was formerly a *bajir*, or »desert depression», which subsequently became filled by the river. But after the latter began to dwindle, the supply diminished, and the lake dried up. About twelve years ago attempts were made to secure a recurrence of the flow by deepening the shallower parts of the canal, but they ended in failure. This lake, then, affords an example of the fate that will overtake all these desert lakes as soon as the river ceases to flow in proximity to them.

The Tarim still retained the same character as before; that is to say, it was narrow, deep, and sluggish. All day forest of respectable dimensions was quite common, alternating with connected sand-dunes and dense tamarisk thickets, whilst the banks were everywhere fringed with reeds. After that several ariks, then dry, leave the right bank for the lake of Al-katik-köl, which is likewise dry and its bed converted in part into wheat-fields. The lake-bed turns to the east, and sends off an outflow canal to unite with the Tarim at Arghamtschi-baghladi. Beyond that the river runs for a good distance towards the north-east without any troublesome loops. On the left is a *boldschemal*, containing a pool called Jilgha-köl. We made our camp at Ajagh-arghan or Arghan, just below the station-house on the great caravan-road. This the Musulmans call by the Chinese name of *gen-deng*. Arghan is the Ajrilghan of Prschevalskij; the word *arghan* being a convenient abbreviation in daily use for *ajrilghan*, which means the point of bifurcation of a river or a road. As a matter of fact several river-arms unite at this particular spot, although to one paddling up-stream they do divide. Originally the name was quite justified also to one rowing down-stream, for Arghan lay formerly at the point where the Tarim divides into the Ettek-tarim and the Tschong-tarim. Of these the former is now dry, the latter carrying the whole of the volume. After the Ettek-tarim dried up, the name Arghan was transferred to the existing point of confluence; and the two Arghans are distinguished by calling the older one Basch-arghan or Upper Arghan, and the other Ajagh-arghan or Lower Arghan. This day we again measured the depth of the river at intervals of a minute during the space of a full hour, and obtained a maximum sounding of 4.98 m. In the active streams, which contain a large volume and deposit much alluvium, we get no such depths as this. In point of fact, this part of the Tarim resembles the Ugen-darja, in that both are deep and narrow, and without alluvial deposits, and their volumes of water are quite insignificant, but on the contrary both have a very considerable size of riverbed, though the current is extremely slow. The water was unusually clear. Thus here again, in this moribund arm of the Tarim, we have merely the deeper trench surviving from what was once a much more imposing stream.

Ajagh-arghan was one of my most important centres in the Lop country, and here we accordingly rested a day or two whilst I carried out certain measurements in the river. On 3rd June a *sarik-buran* blew from the east with a velocity of 9 m. in the second, but the wind soon veered round to the east-north-east, the pre-